

Primrose Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee Minutes for November 18, 2009

Attending: Dein, Elkins, Garfoot, Gibson, Haack, Hayward, J. Judd, and D. Judd

Meeting called to order by Dein at 7:35

1. Motion to approve the minutes of October 26 made by Hayward and seconded by Garfoot. Motion carried 7-0.

2. Discussion of the Land Use element of the Comprehensive Plan

(a) There was a presentation by the Chair that was an effort to focus previous discussion and provide a framework for implementing our objectives.

He discussed the following:

Land Use Planning Objectives

- Maintain town character
 - Rural environment and open spaces
 - Limit rapid growth
- Promote agriculture
 - Preserve agricultural land
 - Encourage continuation of farming
- Protect natural resources
 - Discourage habitat fragmentation
 - Support conservation practices

Land Use Guidance Factors

- Establish conceptual goals for siting houses
 - Location within Agricultural, Environmental and Resource Protection Districts
 - Conservation of agricultural land
 - Conservation of natural resources
 - Impact on rural character
 - Impact on adjoining properties
- Create weighted guidance factors to achieve conceptual goals
 - Higher points for higher priorities

Other contributing factors

- Utilization of builds available in parcel(s)
- Record of prior building approvals
- Historical use of land
- Inclusion of conservation easement or other development restriction
- Impacts on Town resources

Limiting Rapid Growth

- Approval of maximum of 4 new houses per year
 - One approval per quarter; no rollovers
 - Leads to max. of 80 new buildings over 20 years
 - Reach maximum builds in about 50-70 years

Implementation

- Transparent and Merit based review of building proposals
 - Applications accepted first month of quarter
 - Ranked by adherence to conceptual goals and consideration of contributory factors

- Minimum score required for approval
- Negotiation process to improve proposal for acceptance
 - Fixed time frame for building to occur
- Review process every 5 years, and revise if necessary

(b) There was a discussion between committee members:

Growth caps were discussed: One member strongly opposed growth caps, and said that it would have the effect that it may take many years for a person to get all his or her builds, that possibly he or she would not be able to get them within his or her lifetime. This constituted a taking. Another member said that whether it was a taking was a legal question, and we should not assume that it is without asking our attorney. Other communities have growth caps. One member said that the problem is that if we are to become more flexible by allowing building in agricultural land or roads across agricultural land, there must be a mechanism for controlling growth. The majority of people do not want rapid growth. Growth caps are one method for controlling growth. Some members said they were against allowing more building unless growth caps were in place. One member said that it doesn't matter what the majority of people think, if they don't own the land, they shouldn't have any say in the matter.

Siting Criteria were discussed: The Chair said that what he has proposed is not set in stone. There is more than one way to do this, but there are different forces, factors and interests in play. Not everyone is going to like all parts of the plan or all siting criteria. Developing criteria will be a balancing act. Some people expressed that they would rather continue to use the criteria for siting in the current plan rather than replace that with Environmental Resource Protection zones. Some members said that they thought it would be nightmare to administer the proposed new siting criteria, and that it might seem subjective to applicants.

Three possibilities were outlined: (a) stay with the siting criteria in the current Plan, (b) replace the siting criteria in the current Plan with various layers given by Standing in his maps of the what might be included in Environmental Resource Protection zones, or (c) develop and adopt the criteria outlined by Dein. Dein said that he did not see his proposal as a third possibility, but as a way of implementing and providing flexibility in Standing's proposal. So there were really only the options (a) and (b).

3. The next meeting was set for December 9th. The plan was to go through Brian's Chapter on Land Use and the Current Land Use Plan, and see what we want to change. Three issues that remain outstanding are whether to adopt Standing's language about Substandard parcels, the 'Farm house', and replacing current siting criteria with Environmental Protection Zones.

4. Public Comment:

—Legally, where do we stand if we have not finished the Comprehensive Planning by Jan. 1st?

— Historical use is not the only siting criteria given in the current Land Use Plan. The Town should use all of the criteria.

—The population of Primrose was higher in the late 1800s than it is now.

—For farmers that own the land and have farmed it, they should be given credit for helping keep the Township the way it is, and their need to now sell lots should be respected.

—The brain power of the people in the audience should have been used to develop the Comprehensive Plan.

—Chapter 8, page 16, look at 4.2 (2). Also on page 7 d (a), would the sale of land to public entities come off the densities? On page 17, it would appear to limit all new structures, ag. or non-ag. in Environmental Resource Protection Zones.

—The proposed amendment of Connors/O'Connor included many of the things Dein is now suggesting, including growth caps.

—The Realtor's Association supports Comprehensive Planning. Why? Because they want it to be entirely clear what criteria have to be met to get a build.

—Would add to the objectives Dein listed that the Town be equitable to all land-owners and consistent with the Dane County Plan.

— Don't support growth caps.

—There may be many unintended consequences to the language that Standing has proposed.

— If a new plan is adopted and growth caps put in place, what is going to happen to the splits already approved?

— There will be growth caps in place for those farms that participate in the Working Lands initiative.

Public comment closed.

4. Motion to adjourn made by Gibson, seconded by J. Judd. Motion carried 8-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Martha Gibson.